

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A process the for the preparation of a compound comprising at least two disulphide bonds from a precursor having at least two pairs of thiol groups, each pair of thiol groups being protected with different thiol-protecting groups, said process comprising:
 - (i) reaction of the precursor deprotection of an acetamidomethyl (Aem), 4-methylbenzyl (MBzl) and/or t-butyl (tBu) protected thiol in the absence of a silyl chloride which comprises reacting said protected thiol with an acid in the presence of an oxidising agent at a first temperature sufficient to effect deprotection and generation of disulphide bonds formation for a first pair of protected thiol groups;
 - (ii) raising the temperature of the reaction mixture from step (i) to a second temperature sufficient to effect deprotection and disulphide bond formation for a second pair of protected thiol groups.
2. (previously amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein said acid is trifluoroacetic acid (TFA).
3. (previously amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein said oxidising agent is dimethyl sulphoxide (DMSO).

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4. (previously amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein deprotection is effected using a TFA/DMSO mixture comprising 1 to 20% DMSO.
5. (previously amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein said protected thiol is present in a peptide.
6. (previously amended) A process as claimed in claim 5 wherein said peptide comprises at least two tBu protected thiols and/or at least two Acm or MBzl protected thiols.
7. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein tBu protected thiols are deprotected at room temperature in step (i).
8. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein Acm or MBzl protected thiols are deprotected at temperatures of 30-50°C, in step (ii).
9. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 8 wherein Acm or MBzl protected thiols are deprotected at temperatures of 50-70°C, in step (ii).